# The PULPIT

*A Periodical of Contemporary Preaching*

JANUARY 1948


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# SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS

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## The Value of Time

In his famous book, *The Idiot,* which is largely autobiographic, Feodor Dostoievsky relates the emotions through which he passed during what he supposed would be the last five minutes of his life, when, on December 22, 1849, he stood on a scaffold on the snow-covered parade ground of one of the Russian regiments of St. Petersburg, with other prisoners sentenced to death for alleged crimes against the government and the czar. Three men, their heads covered with black hoods, had already been fastened to the execution posts. The soldiers stood in front of them with their rifles at their shoulders. Dostoievsky was sixth in the list. In five minutes he knew that his life would be over. At the last moment the prosecutor came forward and read a proclamation of pardon. Those five minutes which Dostoievsky supposed would be his last then seemed to him an infinite time, a vast wealth. He divided up his time: two minutes to take leave of his comrades, two minutes to think for the last time, then a minute to look about him for the last time. Now he had learned the real value of time —of every minute. "Then I would change every minute into a century. I would not lose a single one. I would keep track of all my instants and would not spend any of them lightly." —*Clarence E. Macartney, First Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pa.*

## The Hand of God

Just off the Parkway in Philadelphia stands the famous Rodin Museum. My friend and I stopped in one afternoon. As we made our way into the main hall we saw statues fashioned by the renowned French sculptor. Over to one side we noticed an odd piece of work—just a hand. It seemed somewhat out of place amid the shapely figures and forms; really, I could see nothing very attractive about such a hand. I turned to the guide and asked: "Why did they place that hand in the main display room? What is unusual about it?" Overlooking my inept audacity, he replied courteously: "Look more closely. Have you observed the lettering underneath?" I read: "The Hand of God." We spent the next ten minutes looking at the piece from every angle. It was amazing what we saw in it now. The lines of the fingers, the contour of the wrist, the divineness of the palm—each told a story. The other statues dwindled into insignificance beside it. As we left the museum and made our way down the steps and out the winding walkway, I thought how we fail to recognize the Hand of God near us, in us, every day.—*Roscoe Brown Fisher, Lenoir, N. C.*

## The Foolishness of Worry

A reputable doctor made a tabulation of his patients and the causes of their troubles. He discovered that 40 per cent of them worried over things that never happened; that 30 per cent of them worried over past matters completely beyond their control; that 12 per cent worried over their health, although their ailments were imaginary; that 10 per cent worried about their relatives, friends and neighbors, although in most cases these people could well take care of themselves. Only 8 per cent of the worries had behind them real causes which required attention! I recently read of a scientific research report which revealed that 50 per cent of our bodily ills come from worry, and that is no doubt true. The superintendent of a large insane asylum reported that the two most common causes of mental breakdown are: first, worrying about the future; second, the lack of faith in God, in one's fellow men and in one's self. It is indeed true that "It's worth more to worry less."—*Ray R. Fisher, Augsburg Lutheran Church, Winston-Salem, N. C.*

## 'Peace on Earth'—When?

One of the world's greatest scientists was LeConte du Nouy, who was in Paris at the time of the nazi invasion and later escaped and came to America. In his immortal book, *Human Destiny,* Dr. du Nouy describes how wars will cease and peace be established: "Wars will not cease until the majority of men think universally, until the same ideal orients all wills, and until governments, under the same inspiration, limit their activities to the administration of the common patrimony and the defense of individual liberties. . . . When people have received the same education, when they obey the same moral rules and think universally, they do not easily accept the idea of fighting each other and are very near an understanding." He puts his idea in a nutshell when he says: "Peace must be established by transforming man from the interior and not by erecting external structures. We have already said it: the source of all wars, the source of all evil, lies in us."—*Sam Nader, First Methodist Church, Jennings, La.*

## Christian Communion

Bishop Ledden tells of a recent conference of worldwide Methodism in Springfield, Mass. The most thrilling experience of the conference, according to the bishop, was the communion service. This white American bishop made his way to the communion rail. There he knelt and listened for the ritual of the service. The words were in Spanish. As the bread was passed, he noticed that the hands that served him were black. He did not look up but he thought that those hands must be the hands of a Negro minister. In this gathering was breathed the spirit of the fellowship hymn:

In Christ there is no East nor West,
In him no South nor North;
But one great fellowship of love
Throughout the whole wide earth.

—*Robert L. Clingan, Federated Church, Genoa, N. Y.*

## What Do You See?

Some years ago, in the company of an old Methodist preacher who had served his church for more than fifty years, I drove through the back country of Mississippi. Near sundown we came to the crest of a hill and beheld one of the grand spectacles of nature. Rising from the horizon far upward into the sky was a majestic mass of clouds aflame with the fires of the setting sun. So impressive was the scene that we stopped the car and got out to view it as the night shadows gathered. As a child, a favorite game of mine had been to look for faces in the clouds. On the impulse of the moment, I suggested to my companion that we do this now. At this point the farmer approached us; as we knew him we invited him to join us. Said I to him: "What do you see in that cloud over there?" The farmer replied: "It's mighty big isn't it?" Turning to the old preacher I asked: "And what do you see in the cloud?" Said he: "I see the face of God."—*Eugene Peacock, St. Francis Street Methodist Church, Mobile, Ala.*

## Brotherhood in Brazil

Hernane Tavares de Sa, in his book *The Brazilians,* describes the experiment of South America's largest nation in racial mixture by blending white, black, red and yellow blood. Brazil bars Japanese immigrants because of their custom of marrying only their own kind, whereas the intermarriage of Portuguese and other Europeans, Indians and Negroes is urged as a patriotic duty in the forming of a new race, "The Brazilians, the People of Tomorrow."—*Don E. Smucker, Bethany Biblical Seminary, Chicago.*

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# THE PULPIT

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CHARLES CLAYTON MORRISON, *Editor*

# *THE EDITOR'S PAGE*

## The Event of the Month

THE DECISION of the United Nations, under American leadership, to set up a Jewish state in Palestine has brought rejoicing to the beneficiaries of this action and precipitated a condition of terror and bloodshed between Arabs and Jews. The seizure of one-half of the country, after its occupation and rule for thirteen hundred years, by a world organization devoted to the resistance of aggression, presents an international anomaly in which any principle of justice is difficult to discover. At the end of World War I, the Jewish population of Palestine was about 125,000. Since that date, under the sponsorship of the Zionist movement, this has been increased by immigration to about 600,000 over against an Arab population of more than 1,000,000. Confronted thus with a decreasing disparity in the numbers of the two peoples, and with Great Britain's renunciation of further responsibility for maintaining order, and pressed by the implacable demand of Zionist Jews for a political state of their own, the U. N. stepped in and cut the Gordian knot by taking one-half of the country from the Arabs and giving it to the Jews. Whether this can be enforced without a war, involving the possibility of another world war, remains to be seen. Russia's cooperation with the United States in making the decision is no guarantee that she will not take advantage of her participation to use Palestine for attaining ends which are incompatible with the interests and purposes of the United States. Meantime, the conflict between Jews and Arabs is being waged with bitter fanaticism. Unless the Arabs accept the partition, which at this date seems highly improbable, the burden of enforcement will rest largely upon the United States.

**Palestine to be Partitioned**

## The Book of the Month

A READING OF REVELATION. *By Charles Leslie Venable. Muhlenberg Press, $1.75.*

LIKE the average Bible student, I have never been able to get much sense out of the last book of the New Testament. This is partly due to the exaggeration and remoteness of its imagery and partly to my never having made a systematic effort to understand it. Certain texts with which its context is studded have, of course, been precious to me, as to all Christians. But I have not come to terms with the meaning of the book as a whole. Dr. Venable has. And he has set forth in this small volume a reading of its consecutive chapters. By a "reading" is meant that he has infused into these chapters his own scholarly understanding of what they intend to say. His "reading" is not a commentary, nor is it exactly a paraphrase. He reads aloud (that is, in print) what these chapters mean to him when he reads them to himself. His understanding of the meaning is derived from a thorough study of what the book meant to those to whom it was initially addressed. Thus, through the medium of his mind, I get real understanding of this otherwise strange portion of the Bible. Its theme, "The Victory of Faith," runs like a silver thread from beginning to end. You will acknowledge a real debt to Dr. Venable, as I am glad to do, if you let him read this cryptic book to you.

## A Thought for the Month

A NEW YEAR is about to open. Another large unit of time is rounding out. A new unit is about to take form. The sense of starting over again arises irresistibly in all hearts. To the minister this makes its own special appeal. A new year spells hope—new hope, new faith. And the minister's business is hope. He deals in hope! He is the preacher of a *gospel,* the bearer of good news. He must therefore be a man of hope, not only at the beginning of the year, but all the way through. His prevailing mood must be one of hopeful expectancy. It is his vocation to create confidence, confidence in life, assurance of God and of the future. Upon him depends not only the faith of others, but the success of all great causes which depend upon the faith of men and women—and these causes are legion. The minister stands in a unique relation to the faith of others. They have called him to lead them. He has accepted their call. Leadership in any realm of life, and pre-eminently in the spiritual realm, is impossible except to men of indomitable faith and hope. It is utterly incompatible with a spirit of cynicism or despair. A cynic may find listeners, but not followers. This is a hard saying in times like these when no man can say what the morrow may bring forth. The consciousness that leadership depends upon the possession of faith and hope has its perils. A minister may all too easily professionalize his optimism. He may exhibit it with forced and superficial sanctions. But his followers, his flock, soon detect this professionalism. For the sake of his leadership, as well as for the sake of his own soul, he must go deeper. He must identify himself with his people on their deeper side where their vexations and frustrations are, and he must settle for himself some fundamental accounts with God.

**Hope and Faith for The New Year**

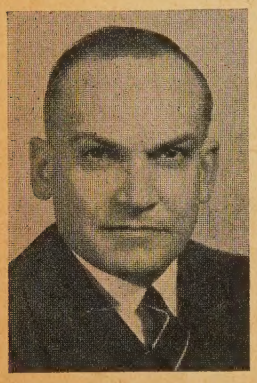
Charles Clayton Morrison

# The New Year Objective

By NORMAN E. NYGAARD

*In the world you have trouble but take courage: I have overcome the world. John 16:33 (Goodspeed).*

CENTURIES ago a group of folk, almost without their knowing it, found themselves in the wilderness. For several hundred years they and their forefathers had lived, first of all as an unwanted population in a foreign land, and later as slaves toiling at a daily stint of mud bricks. A leader had dared the wrath of a great king and in the dead of night had stolen with them away from the foreign country and set his eyes eastward toward a promised land.



They were free once more but they were in a wilderness, an unlovely wilderness, for all its coveys of quail and its rain of manna. And, while the wilderness is a delightful place for an occasional camping trip, its delights finally pall if one has to live in it as a permanent abode. Naturally, therefore, the company divided itself into three groups. There were, first, those who longed again for the leeks and the garlic of Egypt. There were, secondly, those adventurous spirits who enjoyed the freedom of the desert, the unconventional souls who always love a struggle—not for the sake of the end to be sought but for the sake of the struggle itself. And there were, lastly, those few who also looked forward to a glorious future in a new land.

### *'A CHANCE TO BUILD THE KINGDOM'*

We have these same folk still with us. We have those who stand on the threshold of a new year appalled by what it may contain of the unknown and the difficult and longing for the old year and the older years that are past. The one in the immediate past has not perhaps been a particularly happy one but it represented a type of security at least.

We have others who look not forward to the future but who are content to live today alone. This is still a pretty good world, good enough for any of us. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. There isn't much meaning to anything but while we are here we can at least have a good time. Today is no different from yesterday and probably not much different from tomorrow.

But there are still others who stand in hushed expectancy. 1948 is just around the corner. And 1948 spells opportunity. It spells a chance for better things. It means another chance to build a Kingdom, another opportunity to enter a promised land. But, of course, there are always very few of these people. The seers, the prophets—we always think of them as slightly mad; good folk, it is true, the salt of the earth really, but with their heads always in the clouds, not realists.

In the wilderness, if you read the story carefully, you will find that the first-mentioned folk probably predominated. At least the record is one of constant murmuring against such crazy leadership as had brought them into the dire plight in which they found themselves. But the second type of folk were probably also to be found, presumably among the young; although there are many among the older ones as well, enjoying the unconventionality of life in the wilderness, glorying in their new-found freedom.

### *MOSES, A MAN OF VISION*

And, strangely enough, sometimes master of the situation by reason of his courage and fortitude, but often unable to swing the multitude, was one representative of the third mode of thought, an old man, young in spirit and with a heroism rarely to be found in the annals of history. He was a man whose head was literally as well as figuratively in the clouds. For when Sinai belched forth smoke and volcanic gases Moses ascended the side of the mountain to be with God. And with him were two others—probably no more than that—young men named Caleb and Joshua, who were quite fond of their Egypt but had the courage to set their faces toward the land of which their leader spoke. Theirs was the courage of the good mate of whom Joaquin Miller writes in his poem, "Columbus":

> Behind him lay the gray Azores,
> Behind the Gates of Hercules;
> Before him not the ghost of shores,
> Before him only shoreless seas.
> The good mate said: "Now must we pray,
> For lo! the very stars are gone.
> Brave Adm'r'l, speak! What shall I say?"
> "Why, say: Sail on! sail on! and on!"

They would follow their leader. They would sail on through the wilderness with him.

With you this morning I should like to consider different aspects of the wilderness experience and see if, perhaps, they do not have some application to our situation today as we face a new year full of possibilities for success or failure. I shall not suggest that I hope for you a prosperous New Year. For too often we set our hopes upon prosperity and build upon a totally material foundation; but I can wish for you a joyful New Year, a New Year full of opportunity to be of service.

### *A FRESH START IN LIVING*

There is a symbolism about the New Year, of course, that appeals to us. Paul did not have to wait for a new year to be turned about, converted. He began a new year which was a new life in just a moment of time. "Every day is a fresh beginning," the poet insists, but even a day is sometimes too long to wait for a change. Still it remains true that each new year as it comes along partakes of the nature of a fresh challenge. It is like a new book in which we write upon clean, fresh pages.

And so we come to the place where we can well

consider making a fresh start in our moral life. We have reached the place where it would be well to cut ourselves off from all of our old sins. There are those who stand upon the threshold of the New Year looking back with pleasure and with longing eyes upon the delightsome sins of Egypt. Sin, you know, is sometimes fun. "At the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder," said the sage concerning intoxicating drink, but there is a genuine delight for some folks in their cups. On the threshold of a new opportunity these folk would turn their gaze back upon Egypt.

There are others who will live this day without casting longing eyes upon the ease of the past but will be responsive to the cruder pleasures of the wilderness. "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." They are like the young man who goes to his last wild party and then steps out of a hotel window to the death that awaits below, like the soldier who spends his last moments in carnal pleasures before going to the front.

### *TOWARD THE PROMISED LAND*

But there will be some who will sincerely and resolutely turn from Egypt, turn from the wilderness, and will press on toward the promised land. They will say: "I shall cut myself off from the sins of Egypt and from the wilderness existence, and with clean mind and ready heart I shall enter upon the joys of the new country." Like Pilgrim, of course, they will find the need for ridding themselves of the burden of sin, and like him, too, they will exchange that burden for a cross, a yoke that is easy and a burden that is light.

That, of course, is not enough. Two of Reinhold Niebuhr's books written in the early 'thirties were of tremendous social import for their time. Both of them are concerned with the same general theme which can be summed up in the title of the one, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*. In this volume Professor Niebuhr writes: "It is not to be assumed that the integration of personality automatically solves man's social problem. That assumption, which religion inevitably makes, is one of its very defects in dealing with the social problem. A unified personality may still be anti-social in its dominant desires and the very self-respect which issues from its higher integration may become the screen for its anti-social attitudes."

I realize, to be sure, that the individual feels impotent before the huge forces of organized evil which have been let loose upon the world. And it is not at all unusual for a man of God to stand appalled before these forces. Elijah and Jonah ran away from them. Peter denied his Lord when it seemed as if his Master had been overwhelmed by undreamed-of odds. But Jesus spoke a word that is well to remember in a time of crisis. "In the world," he said, "you have trouble, but take courage! I have conquered the world."

### *'OH, FOR THE GOOD OLD DAYS!'*

Now there are many people who are looking backward with longing eyes upon the Egypt of the past. They long for the church as it used to be, for the family life they once knew, for industry before the machine had overwhelmed it, for the old world that once was divided into small, fairly unrelated pieces. And they spend their time in futile longing. Oh, for the good old days!

Then there are others who are out in the wilderness today and who rather like it. It is impermanent, it is true, but it is exciting at any rate, and the impermanence, the change itself, is rather enthralling. There are new adventures around every corner. Having myself lived on more than one occasion a rather changeful life, I find that I am most sympathetic with their point of view. There is a streak of adventure in my make-up that becomes impatient of routine and longs for the excitement of yesteryear when we drove our ambulances to the front, or rode horseback into the green jungle of South America. Born in slightly different circumstances I could easily have become a soldier of fortune, I verily believe.

But the wilderness experience must be impermanent. In the field of economics we cannot accept wild inflation as a norm, to be followed by serious depression. A way must be found out of the uncertainty of our present existence into a condition where there shall be food and toil and shelter for everyone. A way must be found out of the costly war wilderness into a peace where nations shall live happily together. A way must be found out of our costly crime-breeding civilization into a Kingdom of Heaven. And the Kingdom of Heaven, be it said, is the only norm for civilization. It is the only true civilization.

### *ARE DREAMS PRACTICAL?*

Now, to be sure, many of us shake our heads when we think of such a promised land as I have described in the year before us. We cannot easily conceive a condition of personal rectitude when we shall have cut ourselves off from every known sin. It is easy, we say, to speak of such a possibility, but everyone knows that it is not only impractical but for the average individual —yes, for the super-average individual—it is not to be realized. One Man alone was perfect and no one else can possibly be so.

Some of you, whether in other respects you would find yourselves in agreement with the gentleman or not, would be inclined to accept H. L. Mencken's curt estimate of humanity: "Mankind is a sick fly taking a dizzy ride on a gigantic flywheel. . . . He is lazy, improvident and unclean. Life is a combat between jackals and jackasses." Quite conceivably we might agree that that is altogether accurate, but it is a picture of man as he is; and the religion of Jesus Christ conceives of man as he may become. Jesus sees a quite unlovely publican and says to him, "Follow me." He finds a woman of the street whom the mob is about to stone for her evil ways and says to her, "Go and sin no more." He makes a cowardly Peter over into a lion-hearted preacher. Sons of thunder become apostles of love. Certainly Jesus had the most unpromising material with which to work—and perhaps he even chose such material deliberately because of its apparent hopelessness.

The inconsistency of Mencken's point of view, believing as he would quite wholeheartedly in biological evolution, is instantly apparent. Perhaps the world is

full of jackasses and jackals—and "suckers" of whom Barnum cogently spoke. But there are also the heroes of whom Carlyle wrote and folk who by their courage and noble works stand out from the crowd. It can't all be a dizzy flywheel although there do seem to be quite a number of dizzy flies!

Then, if changes are possible in human nature, how about the riddle that is society? As individuals even the stoutest-hearted stand appalled by it. There seems so little we can do. So many in the church, therefore, can only visualize its task as a rescue agency, snatching a few brands from the burning. We dash into a flaming society and snatch one or more individuals and then run out again. Or we plunge into an overwhelming sea to rescue one shipwrecked person clinging to a bit of driftwood, while hundreds of others are dashed to pieces on the rocks. Yes, it does seem folly at times to attempt to do anything about it. And so most of us give it all up as a bad job. After all, what can be done? Often we reach that decision brokenhearted, despairingly.

And then along comes an Evangeline Booth, a Muriel Lester, a George Washington Carver; the first dressed in the severe garb of a great army, the other in rather shabby clothes with unpermanented hair, the last the son of a slave. And each of these does a magnificent work, often singlehandedly. Two of them change the characters of slums in great cities, the last lifts an entire race to a new dignity. They have somehow had the faith to believe that, although each in his or her way is little, unimportant, God could use them mightily—and he did. To them the Kingdom was the only reality. The wilderness in which they found the world living was the temporal, the promised land the permanent.

### *LAUNCHING OUR MAYFLOWERS*

It is not very many centuries ago that a little group of people similar to the Israelites of old set out, not across a trackless desert but across an almost unknown sea, to a promised land. As we set our faces toward the promised land of the New Year may we keep in mind the words of James Russell Lowell in his poem, "The Present Crisis," and find in them both inspiration and courage to go on:

Was the Mayflower launched by cowards, steered by men
behind their time?
Turn those tracks toward Past or Future, that make
Plymouth Rock sublime?
They were men of present valor, stalwart old iconoclasts;
Unconvinced by axe or gibbet that all virtue was the
Past's. . . .

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good
uncouth;
They must upward still, and onward, who would keep
abreast of Truth;
Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires! we ourselves must
Pilgrims be,
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the
desperate winter sea,
Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-
rusted key.

# Anchors and Compulsions

**By ROY A. BURKHART**

*For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Matthew 6:13 (margin).*

*Behold, I make all things new. Revelation 21:5.*

WHEN we come to the conclusion of the prayer Jesus taught us and say, "For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever," we feel with Robert Russell Wicks that there is something that is forever. When we read the words of him who said, "Behold, I make all things new," we feel that life is not static but ever renewing itself, that within the very heart of life there is something explosive, a truth not yet known waiting to be born, a fulfillment waiting to be achieved greater than the world has yet known.

The first step in our thinking this morning is to say that there are two kinds of people who really count. Those who live by a solemn fear and those who are lured by an undying faith; those hitched to the past and those intrigued by the future; those who are anchored to the past or present and those who are compelled by a mighty future with its glory and peril.

Thoreau put his view this way: "One world at a time." Kipling put it this way: "Something hidden, go and find it—go and look behind the ranges. Something lost behind the ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go!" Jesus made the contrast clear when he said: "It was said of old, an eye for an eye, but I say unto you, love your enemies." Most of the fifth chapter of Matthew is based on the contrast between the authority of the past and the truth of the future. Jesus was finally led to his cross because of his refusal to be anchored to the past.

### *BOUND BY THE PAST*

The second step in our thinking is this thought: there is a persistence and a power to those who are anchored to the past. Their power is not generated by an all-out devotion to truth but rather to the status quo that gives them comfort and privilege. In a real sense, this is what is meant by conservatism. Peter, during the trial of Jesus, was not opposed to his Lord. He just wasn't for him enough to endanger himself. He was more concerned about warming his hands and saving his skin.

This kind of conservatism is of more danger to our nation than all the enemies without. Horace Bushnell once said that the progress of righteousness was not delayed by being opposed but by being sat upon. It was Benjamin Franklin who pointed out that all the reforms that have led to the blessing of humanity were originally opposed by the cultured and the comfortable.

The world's trouble is with those of us who will not move until we are pushed. Might it be that that is the

reason humanity is always renewed from the bottom up? The searching point for us this morning is: Are we seekers for truth or are we holders of opinions? Do we borrow a one-sided point of view from a newspaper that supports our biased view or do we seek the whole truth? Do we see everything from the angle of our class or from the viewpoint of all the people and in the perspective of the universal mind? Is it not always well to remember that if we meet a person with whom we disagree, it is because he really thinks he is right?

There is power with those who are anchored to the past. As we said, not because of their devotion to truth but because, while they warm their hands, they are taking care of themselves.

### *THE POWER OF THE FUTURE*

There is a third step to our thinking. It is this: those who are dominated by the power of the future always seem in the end to have the advantage.

Socrates, lured by the future and loyal to visions of truth that never let him go, was opposed by the stand-patters of his day. He was accused of impiety, of believing in strange gods and of corrupting the youth. These were the fantastic charges of those who tried to stop the future. Socrates, often referred to as the pagan Christ, is contemporary today and he will be immortal, but his accusers are not even remembered by name.

What better illustration could we find than Christ himself? Who was ever more dominated by the future than he? Who more bitterly opposed by those anchored to the past? He is still far ahead of our day. Even now, he still belongs to the future; we and our generation hold back to self-devotion, to seek first things of the earth, to live by those things that perish, to be content with our own abundance without any regard to the will of God or the needs of millions of God's children.

### *HOLDING BACK SCIENCE*

This resistance to the future and its triumph can be sensed in generation after generation. Pasteur had a most discouraging time at the beginning of his career. The action of microbes, which is the foundation of bacteriology, was contested by all the orthodox scientists of his day. We all know of the struggles of Galileo's confirmation of the Copernican theory that the earth revolved about the sun and not vice versa, as was previously supposed. What sad results there were for this great man! His discoveries and confirmations were received with hostility. The heliocentric theory belonged to the past and his geocentric theory came as a flash out of the future. The theology of the Roman Catholic Church was committed to the Aristotelian science and looked upon Galileo's geocentric theory as heresy. He was imprisoned and forced to suffer the inquisition.

We have all read of the struggle of Edison to get his phonograph accepted and of Bell to get persons to believe in the telephone. The circulation of the blood was discovered after the discovery of America. The idea was discovered forty years before it was accepted as true. Harvey said that no physician over forty years of age would ever accept it.

I read recently of an engineer by the name of Forsberg, who laid out Prospect park in Brooklyn. It was he who first conceived the idea of a subway and laid the project before the aldermen. They denounced the idea as impossible and insane. Forsberg was discredited, lost his clientele, and later was committed to an asylum.

It was two thousand years after the compass was used in China before the leaders of Europe accepted it for use.

### *BUILDERS OF THE FUTURE*

Thus, all the pivotal discoveries upon which civilization rests have come under opposition; they have come through those dominated by the future. What are some of these pivotal discoveries?

One is the law of inertia, upon which our whole scientific civilization, the stability of our manufacturing processes and our railroads and other media of transportation are built. Another is the universal law of gravitation, discovered by Newton—also pivotal. It is the foundation of modern astronomy and also of modern mechanical engineering. The third is the law of supply and demand. The discovery of that law by Adam Smith was necessary for any science of economics. A fourth was the discovery and proof that the earth is round. Fortified by his faith in it, Columbus set sail toward the new world. A fifth discovery was Darwin's formulation of evolution and natural selection. He laid the foundation for a world-changing philosophy. A sixth discovery is relativity and its fourth dimensional principle, which now the new physics is using to lead us from the old mechanistic and atomistic idea to a spiritualization of all of life.

This new theory of matter, as made clear in the writings of such thinkers as Rutherford, Bohr, Dirac, Schrodinger, Summerfeld, Eddington and Millikin lays the foundation for a kinship between physics and religion and a new dynamic philosophy for the future. These men conclude that the essence of so-called matter is non-material and that there is no sharp distinction between matter and energy; that one can be converted into the other. Eddington consistently maintains the unreality of the physical world. After the physicist has explained the constituents of an atom—electrons, protons, neutrons—all that remains in his hands is a set of equations. Somehow reality has slipped through his fingers.

### *SPIRITUAL LAWS OF LIFE*

There are three other pivotal ideas that have been validated by human experience, though as yet they have not been proved by the method of the test tube. Some validations come within the sanctuary as well as within the laboratory. What are these that experience proves, and by which, if one lives by them, he will know the secret of life?

One is that one gets no more from life and the future than he seeks. He may not get all he seeks, but he will never get more than he asks for. In the Old Testament is a verse that strikes at the heart of it: "I gave them their requests and sent leanness into their soul." Ask, and it shall be given thee—we must be careful what we ask.

A second validation is the power of love. Love is the

very moral order of the universe. The most injurious thing is to hate; the most creative thing, to love—until one grows beyond himself into a oneness with all of God's children. Any civilization that makes love its primary method, keeps the use of violence secondary, is certain to live. When love becomes vital in people, they share of that which they have so that no one lacks that which he needs to live. When love is lived, community grows, people are bound together by their common relationship and common faith and cooperation grows and men and women work together.

This love must become vital in this hour in history when nations are prone to go the way of destruction, of violence. Someone said to me: "Why don't the democracies unite and move toward the renunciation of war, as did Japan? If they adopt universal military training they will so consume their economic resources that they cannot compete with Russia. If, however, they join in denouncing universal military training and move toward the elimination of war, they can then build an economy with which Russia never can compete." Russia will never beat us with bullets in the next twenty-five years. Her only chance is to beat us with ideas.

Love has been validated if it becomes our primary method; then we will not only help shape the destiny of the future but we will belong to it.

### *THE POWER OF FAITH*

The third validation is that there is a greater Other and that it guides us and uses us if we fully surrender. You can trace this faith from Socrates up through the generations to Christ and on through Paul, through some great scientists, philosophers, artists, musicians and others.

Our own Abraham Lincoln had this faith, for he said: "That the Almighty does make use of human agencies and directly intervenes in human affairs is one of the plainest statements of the Bible. I have had so many evidences of his direction, so many instances when I have been controlled by some other power than my own will, that I have no doubt but what this power comes from above. I frequently see my way clear to a decision when I am conscious that I have no sufficient facts upon which to found it. But I cannot recall a single instance in which I have followed my own judgment, founded on such a decision, where the results were unsatisfactory; whereas in almost every instance where I have yielded to the views of others I have had occasion to regret it. I am satisfied that when the Almighty wants me to do or not to do a particular thing, he finds a way of letting me know it. I am confident it is his desire to restore the union. He will do it in his good time."

### *BEYOND PHYSICAL SCIENCE*

Our final step today in our thought is this consideration: What claim does the future now lay upon us? One, I believe, is metaphysical—the explanation of the world of spirit, to discover more of the nature of life, of existence, of reality, of ways by which man may grow into the universal mind. Beyond it is the explanation of the psychic world. Even spiritualism, now largely in the hands of charlatans, may, like medicine, become freed from fakery to true and earnest search.

All of us would agree that physical science is a tremendous and awe-inspiring achievement. And yet, Carlyle, Emerson and Hyslop all maintained that physical science, with all of its wonderful achievements, has rather diminished man's sense of his high destiny. It has led him to be devoted to things but neglected the development of his spirit. Emerson said, "Things are in the saddle and riding us." Physical science has made man himself unimportant in the cosmos.

It is high time we ask, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" The Bible answers, "Thou hast created him a little lower than God." We need research in the whole matter of reality; of prayer; of immortality and communion with those who have gone on.

### *THE FULFILLMENT OF FREEDOM*

Second, the future calls to us to discover another secret. It is the secret of motivation to develop one's spiritual nature and individually and collectively to take the highest road. We know enough now to build heaven on earth. But we really don't want to. How can we come to want to with supreme devotion?

The third area of research that the world must explore is in the area of perfecting the collective will. How can the collective will be motivated by a will as revealed in Christ? How can it be the fulfillment of freedom? How can persons become big enough for it? How deal with those aspects of the collective will that would enslave the world? These are basic questions and the future says, "Find the answers if you would live."

So today we may well ask: Am I hopelessly anchored or am I faithfully dominated by the true power of the future?

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WHEN our bodies are fagged out with the strain of life, we cannot by our volition refill the spent, depleted reservoirs of our physical energies. No, we must re-establish right relations with the universe. There is ample power there—in the air, in the sunlight, on the sea, among the mountains—plenteous power to be assimilated and appropriated. Do you know what that analogy means in the spiritual life—what prayer is, in a word? Prayer is not begging; it is intake, uncluttering the waterways to the living fountains and filling the inflow from exhaustless reservoirs.

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK.

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WHAT Christianity needs is that it shall be filled to overflowing with the spirit of Jesus, and in the strength of that shall spiritualize itself into a living religion of inwardness and love, such as its destined purpose should make it. Only as such can it become the leaven in the spiritual life of mankind. What has been passing for Christianity during these nineteen centuries is merely a beginning, full of weakness and mistakes, not a full-grown Christianity springing from the spirit of Jesus.

ALBERT SCHWEITZER.

# 'Urgency, Humility, Craftsmanship'

By MERVIN M. DEEMS

*And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect. Hebrews 11:39. (Revised Standard Version)*

"APART from us." As you know, the writer of this book of Hebrews has been naming heroes of the faith. "And all these," he goes on to say, "though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect."

In times past that judgment has seemed to me unfair. After all, if men like Abraham and Moses and Gideon and David and the rest had done their job the best they knew they ought to have received their reward. Doubtless they did, but it was not the full attainment of their goal. For a long time, I say, this seemed to me unjust, as though, even under the direction of God and in spite of their faith, they lost out. But in addition to what is said in Scripture I know from these very days how true these words are: "since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect." I say I have been startled by what those words imply for our time. If they had been designed especially for these postwar years they could not have expressed our responsibility better. They are almost like a cry from those who two and three years ago were fighting *our* battles. How can what *they* were fighting for come to pass without us?

### *IN THE FIELD OF SCIENCE*

See how this idea is followed through in other areas. No one could dispute it in science. Whatever the field of knowledge, it is a compilation of what has been tried and tested and learned in preceding centuries and ages. Wherever the immediate goal has been attained it is the result of long labor and unceasing faith in the past. And he who makes the discovery or brings to fruition the research is, in a sense, perfecting that labor, that faith of those gone before.

See how this works out in innumerable ways of life. A child is cut off, under tragic circumstances, and presently a hospital for children, or a home, is erected —or the incident is enshrined in literature or art. That which had begun in fair promise, but was apparently hopelessly checked, can only be completed in some way by what is done afterward. We may call this a mere matter of memorials but I believe it is something more. It is a striving to fill out, but in a far richer way, that which did not come to be.

No less in the area of religion are we responsible not merely for the future, not only for our brief day, but also to those who have gone before. For however perfect their faith may have been—and surely in this congregation there are many who can remember the faith of a father, a mother, expressed in the home and centered in God, or the faith of a dear friend—however that faith of theirs may seem to surpass by leaps and bounds any we may choose or desire to muster, yet we know how greatly the fruition of their fondest hopes depends upon us.

### *IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR TIME*

Sometimes we dream about this responsibility, but we do not face it in our own life. You remember the closing lines of the genial, easygoing, incapable Caponsacchi in *The Ring and the Book:*

Just as a drudging student trims his lamp,
Opens his Plutarch, puts him in the place
Of Roman, Grecian; draws the patched gown close,
Dreams, "Thus should I fight, save or rule the world!"
Then smilingly, contentedly, awakes
To the old solitary nothingness.
So I, from such communion, pass content.
O great, just, good God! Miserable me.

There is a little of that, I suspect, in all of us. Put me back in the thirteenth century and I, too, could be a St. Francis! But in this twentieth . . .?

But far more of us are realizing at least some of the implications of our time and are profoundly disturbed by its urgency—so profoundly indeed that we are baffled. We don't know what to do.

Meanwhile time is passing. I am not going to pause on this matter of urgency. I could, but it has been said before, from this pulpit and many others, far better than I can say it. Indeed, it has been said so often that sentences which were once incisive and sharp have, by repetition, become expected and almost platitudinous. I do not desire to repeat them. But I want to place this matter of urgency where it properly belongs, and that is *with ourselves.*

### *THE CHALLENGE OF TODAY*

The urgency isn't out there in the world somewhere. It is that all of a sudden we've got to be good, we've got to be moral, we've got to have control (over ourselves, I mean)—and how fitted for all this are we?

All at once we have to measure up in *our* faith to the profound hopes, the high ideals, of those war years—and how can we?

This is our urgency, for out of this our faith (or unfaith!) are the issues of our life. This we must come to see—not the urgency of the fear out there.

We said, you will remember, after the First World War: "There must never be another war: it would be too horrible to contemplate." We're saying that now—with much greater reason to say it. But who will believe it until it is upon us—and too late?

You will remember how Jesus responded with a

This sermon was preached in Rockefeller chapel, University of Chicago.

story set in hell where the rich man begs that the poor man in Abraham's bosom may go and warn his five brothers, still living, lest they come to torment. Abraham says: " 'They have Moses and the prophets. . . .' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead they will repent.' He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.' "

### *CHRISTIANITY A WAY OF LIFE*

But Christianity is a way of faith for souls sensitive to this urgency. For "we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and keep their souls." These words were written by the same writer who gave us our text under the urgency of his times. It is as simple as this, that when we cast ourselves upon God, and like Christ, worship him and bend our wills to his, we have a different atmosphere within and we change that without.

This, of course, forces humility upon us. So much to do, so little time to do it, so ineffectual we seem. Humility should be one of the moods of this campus. We are seekers after truth—oh yes, but far more than that: we seek a way of life—a better way of life—for all men. We seek *the* way. Shall I capitalize the word Way? We are next door to Negroes who are crowded together in unspeakable living conditions. Presently we shall have rent gougers doing their nefarious work upon defenseless people who simply do not know how or where to turn for help. We are presumably here the "good society." But such thoughts, and others like them, should give us pause. We can hardly claim the name "good society," much less Christian, when we cannot make society (including ourselves) good!

### *A CALL TO URGENCY*

I want to tell you, now, where I got the title of this sermon. It is the heading of the third section of the symposium on *The Preparatory Schools and Religion in Our Time.** In the Call that was issued to the headmasters and headmistresses and teachers in Protestant and non-sectarian independent schools for a conference are these words:

> "The receding tides of war have left us with urgent and critical problems—and opportunities of unparalleled proportions. Consequently, we feel the great need for the working of the spirit of God in the lives of men, for only in this spirit and through this power can these problems be solved and these opportunities realized. We believe that our fellow headmasters and headmistresses will welcome with us an opportunity to come together to quicken within ourselves a spiritual awareness that may be reflected in the lives of the young people whom we guide. . . ."

One gathers, as he reads the messages of this important conference held some months ago that here was a sense of urgency but not of hopelessness: a mood of humility, but not of powerlessness, and an intention to develop a craftsmanship that would bring to at least partial fruition the goals that had been set.

*Association Press, 1947.

This matter of craftsmanship is to be thought of not only in the realm of mechanics and the arts, not only as the steering of such a course in international relations that liberties shall be preserved and extended and all peoples benefited; not only in the realm of teacher-student relationships but always and above all in the matter of the successful steering of one's life. Craftsmanship in one's life is bringing oneself into relation with a personal God, and with Christ who revealed him, and in thus living one's faith out. This cannot be delegated nor escaped.

### *CRAFTSMANSHIP AND FAITH*

Long ago, when Thoreau was trying to explain where he lived and what he lived for, he wrote: "I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor. It is something to be able to paint a particular picture or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful; but it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of the arts."

We know—or should know—that we cannot lift ourselves by our own bootstraps. We know—or should know—our deep need of God.

Our craftsmanship, if we are to make these few years count, involves our seeing millions and their problems but not losing sight of our own character; it means being concerned for and connected with great causes the world over—but also being alive to the issues in our own back yard. My confident hope is that our Christian faith will enable us to develop this craftsmanship.

For "we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and keep their souls."

Last night, in company with friends, I heard Eugene Ormandy conduct the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in Cesar Franck's *Symphony in D Minor*. As the director beautifully brought out the themes of the symphony (he used no score) and permitted the composer to speak, as it were, through his music, I asked myself how all this came to pass. I knew, of course, that we were in the presence of musical genius; I knew that long hours of practice had been required. But I also knew that here was a director dedicated to his task, under the sway of what the composer wanted to say, and communicating that to his orchestra, so that together they lifted us all to the stars. And I said to myself: I wish, under the direction of God, that could happen to my life, that out of all its dissonances, its disharmonies, its problems and bafflements, there might come some harmony and meaning. Tell me, is that presumptuous? Or were we meant for that?

### *WHAT RELIGION DOES*

David Livingstone, that great little man who, in addition to being a missionary, helped destroy the slave trade, made a profound impression upon Henry M. Stanley, who found him in the heart of Africa. Stanley wrote of Livingstone: ". . . he has such faith in the

goodness of Providence. . . . His religion is neither demonstrative nor loud, but manifests itself in a quiet, practical way and is always at work. . . . Without it, Livingstone, with his ardent temperament, his enthusiasm, his high spirit and courage, must have become uncompanionable and a hard master. Religion has tamed him and made him a Christian gentleman."

"And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect."

# You Can Master Fear

**By HAROLD W. RUOPP**

"THOU shalt not be afraid for the terror by night . . . nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday." For men and women who are afraid of the nighttime and the noonday, those words are good news. In the midst of a storm at sea, Jesus said to his disciples: "Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid." For those of us who are constantly afraid of the storms of life, those words come as good news.

"Be not anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." For those of us who are afraid of tomorrow and next week and next year—always afraid of the future—those words come as reassuring good news. "In the world, ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." For men and women who are carrying difficult and heavy burdens and are afraid lest they go on and on, those words are good news. "For God," says St. Paul, "hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

### *PUBLIC ENEMY, NUMBER 1*

The Bible, you see, is tremendously realistic about this matter of fear. It knows that men are afraid—some men all the time, all men some of the time—therefore much of its message has to do with people who are haunted by fear and worry and anxiety.

Fear! Private enemy, No. 1! Public enemy, No. 1! For out of fear comes a whole train of evils. Out of fear, for example, come most of our resentments and hatreds. You can put it into a simple, but terrifying formula: What we fear we hate, what we hate we kill. And in the process we destroy ourselves as well.

And out of our fears arises much of the loneliness in which so many people find themselves involved. For loneliness is not so much a matter of isolation as it is of insulation; and the reason people insulate themselves from other people is because of fear. It is human to want to love and to be loved. It is normal and natural to want to give and to receive understanding and sympathy. But again and again fear comes in to defeat the giving and the receiving of love.

Out of our fears come not only resentments and hatreds and loneliness; out of fears, too, come sickness—mental, emotional and physical ill-health. The poison of fear! More deadly even than arsenic! For if you take a sufficient dose of arsenic, you just die. But if you fill your system with the poison of fear you destroy not only yourself, you inevitably destroy all those delicate personal relationships in which you as a human being are involved.

But, thanks be to God, we do not need to go on forever being the victims of fear. We *can* master fear. There is a way.

### *CROWDING OUT WORRY*

Let me remind you, as I keep reminding myself, that fear, or worry, is a habit of mind, like any other habit we may have. And it is a bad habit. Not worrying also is a habit which can be achieved, because many people have achieved it.

The habit of not worrying is an art, and is to be learned like any other art. It has its technique, just as there is a technique to the art of playing a violin or painting a picture.

In the technique of learning not to worry there are two things that need to be practiced. One is *substitution.* I mean by that the process of constantly thinking positive and creative thoughts, and in so doing, crowding out the worry thoughts.

There are two ways of getting rid of weeds in a lawn. One way is to pull out the weeds one by one; the other is to keep planting an abundance of good grass seed—and letting the grass crowd out the weeds. That's substitution!

This is not the same as saying, "Forget your fears," for it is not that easy. When a person merely tries to put a thought *out* of his mind he is very likely to drive it much deeper *into* his mind. It goes down and down. He may say that he has no fear, and yet his stomach or his heart or his blood pressure keeps telling him that something is wrong. For psychic difficulties in which fear is involved always manifest themselves through the physical organ that is weakest. No, "Forget it" is bad advice. Don't push it down. Crowd it out. Substitute the positive for the negative, the creative for the destructive, the healthy for the unhealthy. St. Paul said it: "Whatsoever things are true . . . honest . . . just . . . pure . . . lovely . . . and of good report . . . think on these things." And another, who was equally wise, said: "Perfect love casteth out fear."

### *LET GO—AND LET GOD*

There is a second thing which must be learned if fear is to be mastered. It may be called *appropriation.* Let me illustrate it. Two men are engaged in prayer.

One says: "O Lord, help me. Take away my fear. Give me peace. Give me trust. Fill me with hope." The other prays: "O Lord, I rest in thee. I *take* peace. I belong to thee. Thou art my dwelling place and underneath are the everlasting arms. In thee I live and move and have my being. I give myself to thee. I open myself to thy strength." Do you get the difference? For there is all the difference in the world.

Once there was a woman, carrying a heavy suitcase, who ran to catch a crowded streetcar. When she was safely aboard, the conductor noticed that she stood in the aisle, clinging tightly to her suitcase. Finally, he said to her: "Lady, you can put your suitcase down now; the car will carry it for you."

That's it! That's the secret! To let go—and let God! We do not have to beg for God's help—all we need do is to realize his presence and appropriate his power. For there is a great reservoir of spiritual power inside of us and outside of us waiting to be tapped and utilized. There are channels from that reservoir running to each one of us. But the power in the reservoir does not become available and effective until we ourselves lift the sluice gates—and let the power of God flow through.

### *PRACTICING GOD'S PRESENCE*

Underneath are the everlasting arms! Of course! But how do we know the arms are there? There is only one way to find out. Let go of yourself with reckless abandon, and say: "O God, I have been struggling with myself for a long, long time; and I am nervous, tired, sick. Now I take you at your word. Here I come, down into your arms." Then and only then will you know the arms are there!

We *can* master fear. And how shall we know that we are winning in our struggle with fear? The answer is, We shall never be in doubt. The first and sure sign will be a new relaxation, a new poise, a new peace. In the place of former tensions and dark forebodings and shaky nerves, we shall begin to feel a growing calm, which is always part of victorious Christian living—and the inevitable result of practicing the presence of God.

"Consider the lilies," says Jesus, "how they grow." Well, how do they grow? Not by a frenzy of effort or by a perpetual worry lest they do not grow. They grow by obeying the laws of nature and of God—by opening up in a relaxed way to the sun above and by an equally quiet absorption from the soil beneath.

Yes, "Consider the lilies." And the Master who spoke those words also said at the very end of his life: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Even death by crucifixion cannot shatter the inner calm of the person who draws his strength from the love of God.

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For the thoughts regarding Substitution and Appropriation I am indebted to Dr. Winfred Rhoades, whose writings have long been a source of inspiration to me. H. W. R.

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THERE is danger that all liberty may be crowded out of our civilization. We must remember that religious liberty is not an end within itself and it cannot be departmentalized. Free institutions and organizations must exist if we expect to have free people.

EDWIN MCNEILL POTEAT.

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I CAN SEE how it might be possible for a man to look down upon the earth and be an atheist, but I cannot conceive how he could look up into the heavens and say there is no God.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

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# A Pastoral Prayer

**By HERBERT W. HAHN**

ETERNAL God and Father, whose mercies are ever new as the morning, whose love is unfailing, and whose truth endureth throughout all generations, we praise Thee, we worship Thee, we magnify Thy holy name. We rejoice that we may look up by faith and call Thee "Our Father." Though Thou dwellest in the heavens above, yet Thou art not far from any one of us, and desirest to make Thine abode in the hearts of all those who love and serve Thee.

Thou hast, indeed, made us for Thyself, and our souls are restless until they rest in Thee. We are Thine, do Thou befriend us. Lead us in right paths and guide us in the truth. May Thy Holy Spirit bear witness with our spirit, and assure us that we are Thy children. Give us grace to live as children of the Most High, and to walk worthy of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Cleanse our hearts, purify our thoughts, enlighten our minds and strengthen our wills to do those things that are well-pleasing in Thy sight. We have not always lived at our best, but have at times fallen short of Thy glory. Save us, we beseech Thee, from choosing our own willful way, and deliver us from evil. Create in us a clean heart and renew a right spirit within us, that we may delight to do Thy will, O God, and walk in Thy holy way.

May Thy grace be sufficient for all our needs. Strengthen us with might by Thy Spirit in the inner man, that we may be victorious on the hidden battlefield of the soul where the issues of life are fought. Enable us to triumph over evil and to be more than conquerors through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. For Thine is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, forever, Amen.

# The Best Years of Our Lives

By ABRAHAM J. FELDMAN

*So teach us to number our days that we may get us a heart of wisdom. Psalm 90:12.*

STANDING on the threshold of a New Year, we needs must be aware of the fact that nothing in life is static. Everything is changeable. Life is progression. From the instant of conception, progression begins. It continues through our conscious life, and even death does not end the process, since even then, so far as the body is concerned, change continues. From foetus to infant, from infant to youth, from youth to manhood and womanhood, to old age and death, to the decay of the body and its transformation through chemical processes and its reappearance in other forms, we are in process of changing. Nothing in the world is static—the only fact that does not change is the fact of change itself.

Likewise, intellectually, socially, emotionally, change is continuous. It is the law of life. Today we are different from what we were yesterday, and tomorrow we shall not be like what we are today.

### *WE ARE NOT AS WE WERE*

At the threshold of another year, then, we are aware that we are a year older, and that many changes have taken place in every one of us. Perhaps we can judge this best by appraising ourselves in terms of larger units of time, say ten years. Examine ourselves as we were ten years ago, and as we are today, and we realize quickly not only that we have changed physically, but otherwise. We have seen more, we have learned more, we have experienced more, and in the light of these we must be different from what we were a decade ago. Because we are different, we react differently. Our outlook upon life has changed, our mood has changed, our sense of values has undergone change, our judgment of what is worth while and what is trivial has changed. In other words, the process of living and the experience of life, year by year, cumulatively condition us, affect us. We are not exactly as we were.

This being so, when we count our days it behooves us to pray with the psalmist: "Teach us so to number our days, that we may acquire a heart of wisdom." We should so evaluate our lives that we may profit by living and becoming wiser, maturer, stronger, nobler, and by reason of such living find ourselves continuously enriched and grown.

This is as it should be. But actually what do we find? Often, as we ask ourselves about the value of our

This sermon was delivered at Congregation Beth Israel, Hartford, Conn., on Jewish New Year, Sept. 14, 1947.


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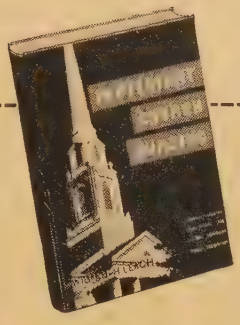

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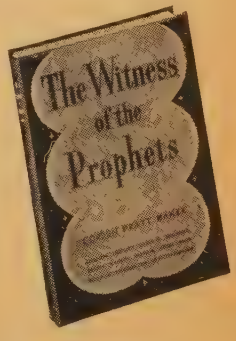


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living, as we count the days, we are prone to look back to the past and find in another period other than the present—in "the good, old days"—the most satisfying years, the happiest years, "the best years of our lives"; and then, wistfully, yearningly, nostalgically, we cry out in the words of Job: "Oh, that I were as in the months of old!" Those were "the days when God watched over me." Sometimes, like Job, we would be "as I was in the days of my youth."

I have heard men who succeeded in business or in their professions or in their personal lives, from the vantage point of achievement, express a longing for "the good, old days" of dreaming and planning and struggle. Those, they say, were the "best" years.

True enough. Ambition, vision, hope, effort, the climb—these are happiness-producing. They are good! But need the period of success be less good, less exciting, less stimulating?

### *'AH, TO BE YOUNG AGAIN!'*

I have met with people in their hours of heavy responsibility. For instance: mothers performing the routine duties of rearing children; fathers burdened with the cares of providing for their families; men and women, especially in their middle years or older years, with the increasing worries, problems, cares of the years —all of these look back to "the good, old days" and yearn for them. Sometimes they actually use these words: "Ah, those carefree childhood days! Ah, for those exciting student days! Ah, to be young again, without burdens and cares! Oh, the glorious days of adolescence, or the days of early love and courtship, or the days when the children were beginning to reveal their budding minds and unfolding their characters and personalities! Ah, to be young again, strong again, unburdened!" Oh, for the time when the greatest tragedy was when we had no date on a Saturday night, or when the one we thought at the moment was the best girl went out with someone else!

I do not sneer at those days, or minimize them. I do not mean to suggest that those years were not happy days measured by the greater cares, the heavier burdens, the sore afflictions of the present. But I do mean to suggest this: If we count our days wisely and thoughtfully, if we evaluate the living process accurately, and if we would go on living zestfully, then the best years of our lives are generally not in the long ago, or even yesteryear. Yes, they were "best," as they should have been, but only relatively, only as of that hour and up to that point. If we live wisely and change is cumulative and life is progression, then "the best years of our lives" are *now*. All the "bests" of other years, all the experiences of the past, make us what we are today. This hour is the culmination of the past and, therefore, this is the "best" year of our lives.

### *TO LONG FOR THE PAST IS FUTILE*

Let me put it this way. This year that is ending, I am sure, did not have everything that you or I would have wished for. But standing at the end of this latest of years, we have accumulated experiences, joys, sorrows, fears, anxieties, hopes, ambitions, triumphs, failures; and facing the future, we are facing it with all the load of all the preceding years of our lives. Of ne-

# Still—the American Dream

**By THOMAS CURTIS CLARK**

TO PLYMOUTH—haven at last—came men of dreams;
Long days, dread nights behind them,
Tempest, disease and death.
Here, they said, we rest.
On their knees they fell, and prayed—
To Him who marks the sparrow's fall,
And who sees His children
Bowed under tyranny's yoke.
They prayed, and He heard—
The Lord of Europe and Asia—and America.

Then a song they sang,
In their new-found freedom.
A strange light was on their faces,
A bright hope in their hearts.
And this their song:
"O new world that is to be;
Where man and child may be free,
Where truth is, and liberty!
Ours—it is ours to build
A nation cursed by no 'Majesty,'
But a realm of God—for men.
Here, on this fresh, clean sod
An altar at last we raise
To His praise."

But their dream—our fathers' dream—
Is dying.
Shall we let it die?
What of our children,
And their children's children?

By the sufferings of our sires,
By their faithful altar fires,
It shall not die.
It lives!
We, the sons of noble sires,
To Plymouth, haven of faith,
Retrace our steps,
And raise an altar;
And this our vow:
Their dream—our fathers' dream—
Shall never die!

cessity this year that is now ending must be for you and for me the fullest, richest year of our lives, thus far, even as the New Year now beginning, when it leaves us will leave us fuller and richer than we are tonight.

To long for the past seems to me to be such a foolish pastime. First, because it is futile. We cannot return to the past, we cannot restore it. And, second, because were it possible to recapture the past, we would discover in the light of our subsequent experiences that actually the "best years," the happiest years of life were not then.

I once knew a dear and wise elderly lady. I have often heard her say, "People who do not want to grow old must arrange to die young." By this observation she meant more than the words suggested. I knew her well. She aged gracefully because every year she lived was always, in its turn, the best year of her life. She enjoyed her childhood, she enjoyed her adolescence, she enjoyed the thrills and satisfactions and cares and problems and joys of young wifehood and motherhood, each in turn, and made them her best years. She had ever greater compensations because they were added to all that went before. She had so much more of life and when her older years came—and that is when I knew her—she was still enjoying the best years of her life.

No, it is foolish to regret our old age or our middle years because old age or middle age have a price. Have we forgotten that youth, too, exacts a price? It is foolish to long for the carefree existence of childhood when we are confronted with the thrilling responsibilities of maturity. It is a pathetic sight when we behold someone who is older trying to play the part of flaming, romantic youth and casting aside and scorning the genuine comfort and thrills of shared memories, of shared struggles and hopes and dreams, and the achievements of family life. These are foolish also because, for one thing, to crave for the past is in fact to crave an arrested life, which is not a blessing but a curse. And in the second place, craving for the past, a desire to recapture the past, reveals a false set of values. Besides, youth is not the only golden age of life. Age too has its gold, its glories, its compensations, its bliss. Freedom from cares, from responsibility, from duties and obligations, is not a blessing. Cares, duties, tasks often are the most thrilling experiences of life.

### *TIME MARCHES ON—AND WE GO ON*

We need the insight of the psalmist, "Teach us so to number our days that we may acquire a heart of wisdom." How wise the poet was, and how accurate! After all, wisdom without experience does not exist, and if our wisdom at fifty is only that wisdom which we had at twenty, we are unwise indeed, and we have lived without value.

And so we face another year. Time marches on. History continues to weave its web. We go on. What the New Year has in store for us none of us knows; only God knows. But if we face it with the prayer of the psalmist to acquire a heart of wisdom, we shall also resolve to add to the store of wisdom which we have that which the New Year will bring, and then, perforce, whatever our habits, whatever our goals, this


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New Year will become the richest, the fullest year of our lives, making the *now* the best, the wisest, the most precious period of our lives. For this we need both our own will and divine aid and guidance. May both be ours as we now step across the threshold into the New Year.

# Whose Is This Image?

**By W. HOWARD LEE**

*And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? Matthew 22:19, 20.*

THIS QUESTION was part of an answer our Lord gave to his enemies who had "plotted to trap him in his talk." The Sanhedrin could not wield the power of death but they wanted to be rid of Jesus. And so they came posing their question which, they thought, would condemn him whichever way he answered. "Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not?" If he said yes, would he not be discredited before the people as faithless, a traitor to their traditions? If he said no, they could hand him over to the Roman authorities as a revolutionary. But he "detected their malice" and gave them a reply both astute and profound. Holding up before them the coin used for payment of the poll tax, he asked, "Whose is this image?" When in unison they chorused, "Caesar's," he countered with the statement that the ages have pondered: "Give Caesar what belongs to Caesar, give God what belongs to God." (Moffatt)

Those words have real significance for us here and now, for we must learn to tell the difference between what belongs to Caesar (the civil power) and what belongs to God; and, knowing the one from the other, fulfill our duty to both. It is mainly to the second, giving "God what belongs to God," that I call your reflections this morning.

"God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." This impressive statement from the book of Genesis reminds us that the coin of man's life was minted to bear the image of the Creator. And in his letter to the Colossians St. Paul declares to all who are "risen with Christ," all who would be his disciples, that they "have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." Through the centuries man's sin and rebellion may have defaced or worn thin the image of his Creator, but in the Christian fellowship the coin of human life and character is reminted to show clearly "whose image is this." Think, then, of your life in all its ways and ask yourself searchingly today, "Whose image is this?"

I

First, whose image is on your *work?* Is your work the occupation at which you merely "make a living" or do you think of your work as part of your life? Our machine age with its mass production assembly lines makes the sense of vocation difficult for many workers. It is relatively easy for the doctor, the teacher, the lawyer, dealing as they do with human life and destiny, to do their daily tasks with a knowledge that they are "called" to that work. It is not hard for the butcher, the baker and the homemaker to labor with the same sense of vocation, ministering as they do to the elemental human needs. But the man or woman who does some minute, mechanical operation in a great industry must needs live close to God to understand that such work too can be done to the glory of God.

Some young women telling about their work in a great factory pointed out this difficulty when they said that all they did for eight hours a day was to wind copper wire around little coils. They could not see the total product of which their labor served a necessary part; they had no notion of how they were serving man or God by that monotonous work. Indeed it would require imagination and the knowledge that God is over all life to see in many of our jobs the image of God. Let us take a fresh look at our work to see how it bears the image of the Eternal.

I am speaking to quite a number of young people today. Let me say to you that it is most important that you select wisely your life work. You look out on all the possible fields of endeavor and ask yourself, What shall I do with my life? Before making your decision, make this test: Can I glorify God by this work? If you can, then it is a Christian vocation. One may till the soil or sweep a floor or wield the surgeon's knife or be president of a college, and do it to the glory of God; and when we do it so, it comes to bear his image.

Not merely in church or on our knees do we glorify God, but by taking up life's common tasks and walking truly among them. John Newton once said: "If two angels were sent down from heaven, one to conduct an empire and the other to sweep a street, they would feel no inclination to change employments."

Here in my workshop where I toil
Till head and hands are well-nigh spent,
Out on the road where the dust and soil
Fall thick on garments worn and rent,
Or in the kitchen where I bake
The bread the little children eat,
He comes, his hand of strength I take
And every lonely task grows sweet.

II

And what about our *play?* Should not that too bear the image of our Creator? We Americans have more leisure for play and pastimes than any people ever had before and we probably go to greater extremes in throwing away the time and opportunity offered in our leisure. Many a person who is conscious of God's touch

within the sanctuary and who at work labors under a sense of God's calling, in hours off really "takes off," and in thoughtless, even damaging play mars the image of the Creator.

What about your recreations and amusements? Do they really re-create, or are they merely devices to kill time? A safe standard of judgment is suggested by a story which A. T. Robertson used to tell about a deacon who asked his wife if she thought his collar was clean enough for another wearing; without even looking, she replied: "If it's doubtful, it's dirty." Just so, when conscience raises questions about our amusements: we may safely conclude, If it's doubtful, it's dirty.

Do not suppose that I am saying that we should have less playtime or that we should get less fun out of it. What I am saying is that we should see to it that our leisure as well as our labor bears the image of our Creator. I am speaking to many in this congregation who have finished the workaday labor of life. How are you, in the years that remain to you, to make that leisure bear the image of the Eternal? You cannot waste those years, as so many in that period of life do, in dawdling idleness. Visiting one of our parks recently, I came upon a particularly beautiful parrot in a great cage; I tried to coax some word from the bird, but it only looked back at me, slightly bored I thought, making no sound. After a while I went and asked the attendant if the parrot could talk. "Nope," he said, "He jest sets and looks." But we dare not merely sit and look, if we are to have on our lives the image of God.

Several years ago there came to hand a little book titled *"Making the Most of the Rest of Life."* It was a book addressed especially to people facing retirement, and it outlined constructive, creative hobbies for those


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with time on their hands. It seems to me that it suggests the answer we all need to find to the problem of our leisure—the discovery of worth-while, constructive hobbies at which we can have all manner of fun and still feel that our play bears the image of our Creator.

III

This same test we must make to our *use of money:* "Whose is this image?" No other single thing is so revealing about us as our money—the way we make it, the way we spend it. Nothing else so clearly shows the likeness of God or the reflection of Satan in us as the way we use or misuse money—whether we are conscientious in enterprises—that our money be made honorably, used unselfishly and with wisdom for the good of men and the glory of God—or whether we go after money greedily, with little concern about how it is made as long as we make it, then grasp it selfishly or waste it prodigally.

You have heard me say this sort of thing before, and I know many would rather I should never talk about money. They think the subject is unspiritual. But that is exactly the point I make: that nothing about us so reveals our spirituality or lack of it as our use of the trust God has given us in the form of money. I am convinced that there is nothing *un*spiritual about money except the hand that holds it.

It is amazing to go through the Gospels and find how much our Savior had to say about money. We discover that he taught more about money than he did about heaven. Why, do you suppose? May it not be that on our use of money so clearly depends whether or not we ever reach heaven?

"Whose is this image?" If you take this message seriously, it will surely mean to some that you will make some drastic changes in your work, your play, your use of money; others will go on as before but with a changed outlook on their work, their play, their money. Frank S. Hickman in his book *Signs of Promise* tells us that once he heard from the lips of the revered William R. Wedderspoon, then a Chicago pastor, an account of a startling conversation which he had with a business man of his city. Dr. Wedderspoon had been conducting the funeral service for another business man, and a number of the friends and associates of the departed had been in his audience. In the course of his discourse the minister had declared simply: "My brothers, we are living for two worlds." After the service was over a leading merchant came forward and challenged the statement. "Why, you believe that, don't you?" the minister ejaculated. "No, sir," instantly replied the business man, "I do not. And what is more, most of the men here today did not believe it either." The good minister was astounded. "You do not believe that you are living for two worlds?" he repeated. "No, sir," came the quick response; "we are living for one world and one only. We do not know of any other world than this one. We shape our lives that way, and our business too." The minister was silent for a moment, then he asked: "If you did believe in another world than this, would it make any difference to you?" Again the reply came without hesitation: "Of course it would. If I had the slightest suspicion that we are really living for any other world than this, I should change every major business policy I have before night." That statement indicates that much of our business does not bear the image of God.

Now, without intending it I have preached a stewardship sermon, for what is Christian stewardship but making sure that our work, our play, our time and our money all bear the likeness of our Lord? "Whose is this image?"

# Happy New Year!

**A Sermon for Children by Julius Fischbach**

FOR days and days the postman had been bringing bundles of cards to the door, most of them with large letters and bright colors, saying: "Happy New Year!" It was fun to open the envelopes and look at these cards with their gay pictures, but at the same time it was very puzzling to Johnny, who began to wonder how in the world Happy New Year could come into his front door on a greeting card and just what it meant anyway.

He was thinking about this on New Year's Eve as he climbed wearily upstairs to his room. All at once he heard a tiny little voice calling to him and realized, to his surprise, that it was the angel at the very top of the Christmas tree. As he looked toward the tree the angel smiled at him and said teasingly: "Why, Johnny, don't you know what 'Happy New Year' means?"

Johnny forgot his surprise at hearing the angel speak, and said: "Why, no, that is what I have been wondering about all day long."

"Well, then, I'll tell you," said the angel. "It means growing taller in your body, wiser in your mind, and better in your heart."

### *IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS*

As Johnny began to think just what that could mean he remembered a text his Sunday school teacher had taught the class just two weeks before: "Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." The teacher had explained to them that this meant that Jesus grew stronger in his body, wiser in his understanding, and his love for God and his fellow men grew too.

Pretty soon Johnny awakened—for really he must have been asleep when he heard the Christmas tree

angel speak—and said to himself: "I know what I'll do. I'll surprise mother and dad by cleaning the snow off the walk before they get out of bed."

That evening, as they were seated around the fireplace, father said to Johnny: "Do you remember that last year we made a mark on the wall to show how tall you were? Come over here and let's see if you have grown any during the year."

Of course Johnny jumped to his feet and stood by the wall as father measured. Certainly he had grown! The mark was two whole inches below the top of Johnny's head. Something inside of Johnny seemed to say: "Happy New Year means growing taller and stronger in your body."

As they sat quietly watching the fire, mother suddenly remembered that tomorrow Johnny must start back to school and she also remembered that he must take back his signed report card. She had not seen the card since vacation started and she was afraid it had been lost. Johnny smiled, for he knew where it was, and in fact was very proud of it. Mother was glad too when she looked at it, for she said: "Why, Johnny, these are the best marks you have made during the entire school year!"

Again something seemed to speak, and it said: "Growing wiser in your mind."

### *BEING A GOOD SAMARITAN*

Before mother could sign the card the telephone rang, and father, being closest to it, picked up the receiver. It was Mrs. Brown, a widow lady who lived next door, and as she talked father said: "Well, is that so, Mrs. Brown? I'm glad you told me, for naturally we want our boy to be thoughtful and helpful as a good neighbor should be." Then he said "Good-by" and hung up the receiver and announced—as though he were making a speech over the radio: "Friends, may I announce, we have with us tonight none other than the Good Samaritan in person!"

Then he explained that Mrs. Brown was very thankful to Johnny who had not only shoveled the snow from his own walk, but had gone right on and shoveled her walk too. Johnny was just a little embarrassed at this and looked out toward the other room. Whom should he see but the Christmas tree angel winking at him and then he understood exactly what Happy New Year means. It is growing *taller* in your body, *wiser* in your mind, and *better* in your heart.

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In a democracy such as ours no government can be far ahead of the prevailing climate of public opinion. There is an absolute necessity for public leadership on the part of responsible citizens in preparing that climate so that statesmen may be assured of public support for progressive policies. . . . If we Americans, who have the opportunity for leadership, accept our responsibilities in the creation of a world in which men may live in peace and security, we need not fear the judgment of posterity. Sumner Welles.

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# The Heresy of 'Spiritual Inferiority in the City'

By ELDON A. RAMIGE

RETURNING from city churches to a rural pastorate a few years ago, I again heard the same theme that I used to hear in my boyhood. Having been born and reared in a rural parsonage, I often heard my father express it and I frequently gave voice to the same conviction in my early country pastorate. It was the conviction that the best place to find God is in the country.

### ● *'Keep Away from the Wicked Cities'*

Rural congregations generally believe this and many a city Christian gives assent to it. It is the conviction that if you want to find God, you had better get out into the quiet countryside. If you want to understand the ways of God, watch the things of nature grow. If you want to rear your children aright, get them out of the wicked cities. If the minister wants to be a consecrated spirit, he should seek the rural pastorate. And it is often said that Christianity was born in a rural setting and that Jesus showed his preference for the country by his parables, his teachings and his way of life.

This kind of stress has had its dangers both for the rural and the city Christian. The rural Christian comes to feel that a certain location or group of people can have a monopoly on God. The city Christian may develop an inferiority complex toward his country brother.

Examination of the facts will give us as many reasons for labeling Jesus a city preacher as for calling him a country preacher. Christianity spread more rapidly in the cities than it did in rural areas. Since Jesus' day it has done a most significant work in the cities.

### ● *Spiritual Benefits in the City*

Though it is true that some city ministers can give very good reasons why the city church can point the way to God as readily as the rural place of worship, it does not convince the average rural churchgoer. The city minister explains that we can see the laws of God in the towering skyscraper as in the lofty mountain. The laws of gravitation work with equal wonder in both cases. He may point out that the city dweller with a little flower bed in the corner of his lawn, or even a plant in his apartment window, can follow Jesus' suggestion, "Consider the lilies how they grow."

It can be pointed out that the city dweller has as good a chance at healthy, wholesome living. Statistics can be brought to show that, proportionately, more young men from the country were rejected by the army during the war for physical handicaps than from the city. Also rural schools have as many absences, if not more in proportion to numbers, because of various diseases. Still the country dweller persists in the notion that his children have a better chance for healthy living.

ELDON A. RAMIGE

### ● *Friendliness in the City*

We may point out further that city folks are not lacking in friendliness and sociability. They may not always know their next door neighbor, but they have as many friends as rural people have in their community. Depth of friendship is not dependent upon spatial proximity of neighbors. The responsibilities of the social gospel are felt most keenly when one is in the area where most people are.

We may try to explain that youth in the cities also have unique chances to develop character and integrity. Robert L. Calhoun says, in his book *What Is Man:* "The very impersonality of the public order contributes to the making of grown men and women. Private personal relationships are likely to become trivial without the bracing demands of a larger world. . . . Even person-to-person competition is no substitute for impersonal struggles with refractory raw materials and work schedules. One can outwit, cajole or argue down a human opponent, but not a time clock. Either the job gets done or it does not . . . and this sort of test is indispensable to personal maturity. To be a grown person means not only to be a good companion. It means also to be a disciplined worker trained to cope with impersonal requirements."

### ● *Jesus Christ a City Preacher*

The Christian anywhere takes Jesus as his Master and as long as it is held that Jesus preferred the country to the city in finding his biggest opportunity to bring in the Kingdom of God, so long will the rural Christian believe that he is in the best location. He will also believe that his pastor will remain more God-fearing if he holds on to the country parish. But is it true that Jesus preferred to do his work by the countryside?

Let us look again at Jesus' life with this thought in mind. Certainly no one can doubt that a human soul was always valuable to him whether in city or in country. Jesus came to seek the least and the last and the lost wherever they might be found. But perhaps we shall find that Jesus did more searching in the cities than in the country, that he preached as often in the city and ended up as a city preacher. Jesus finally suggested that his disciples tarry "in the city" till they be endued with power from on high. Not all of his parables had to do with seed and wheat and birds; many had to do with illustrations from the city. Though he went more often to a rural setting for prayer, he went more often to the city to do his work.

In the Gospel of Luke we find more descriptions of Jesus at work in the city than in the country. Even when he spoke in the countryside, most of the people who listened came from the cities. In Luke 8:4 we read: "And when great multitudes came together and they of every city resorted unto him . . ." "And it came to pass while he was in one of the cities . . ." (Luke 5:12). "And it came to pass he went about cities and villages." (Luke 8:1). It was while Jesus was in the city that he told such stories as casting out demons, curing Simon's mother-in-law, and even raising the dead. Jesus ended as a city preacher even if he did not begin as one. If the country was a superior place to preach, why didn't Jesus stay there, especially when city folks were willing to come out to hear him?

### ● *Jesus' Preference for the City*

Jesus not only spent much of his time in the city but there are good grounds for the assertion that he preferred to be there. He did not

always go to the city out of a grim sense of duty, as was the case in those closing days when he went to Jerusalem knowing what the Pharisees had in store for him. He often went from natural desire and choice. He did not always seek to get away from people by stealing out into the quiet countryside. Sometimes he sought refuge in the city. In Luke 9:10 we read, "And he took them and withdrew apart to a city." In his closing days, it is true, he went out every evening to the Mount of Olives for prayer and rest, but he voluntarily came back every morning to the city.

There is no doubt that the greatest emotional concern Jesus ever manifested for any group was for city people. As he looked over his beloved city of Jerusalem he said: "How oft would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings and ye would not." It was for the city people that Jesus wept. It is strange that Jesus is never reported to have shed any tears for the folks in his home village of Nazareth; yet they were in as hopeless a spiritual situation as were the people of Jerusalem.

It seems that Jesus not only preferred to work in the city but he preferred to die there also. Before he set his face to go to Jerusalem, where he knew death awaited him, he had said: "for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." Jerusalem, not Nazareth, is the proper place for a prophet of God to die in.

Many of the figures that Jesus used in his significant teachings were suggested by the city rather than the country. "Ye are the light of the world. A city set upon a hill cannot be hid." "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." The needle's eye referred to the city gate. Jesus came to bring in the Kingdom of God and the very idea of a Kingdom is more easily conceived in a city setting.

### ● *The Kingdom of God in the City*

Jesus never hinted in any of his teachings that it would be harder to find the Kingdom of God in the city than in the country. He did command them to preach, "beginning at Jerusalem." In the stories of events after his resurrection, Jesus' presence is again felt by them while they were in the city of Jerusalem. They were even told that they would find their new spiritual power in the city. "But tarry ye in the city until ye be clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

In the story of the two men walking to Emmaus and being met by Jesus, we find an interesting result coming from that meeting. It is said that the first thing they did, after realizing the presence of Jesus and his power, was to go back at once to the city. It was in Jerusalem where the eleven men were tarrying to praise God. The two residents of Emmaus must be classed as rural and yet these two men have no other thought after Jesus came into their life again than to rush to the city.

### ● *'Prodigals' in City and Country*

Jesus never happened to tell a story of a boy going wrong by leaving his home for the great wicked city, but he did tell of a boy who wasted his substance in riotous living by going to the country. Surely he could also have found plenty of illustrations of boys whose morals were undermined by striking out from a quiet rural home to the stimulating pleasures of city life. In the story that Jesus told the prodigal son is in the country where he fain would have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat. The only point here is that Jesus never remotely suggested that youth who would follow him had better stay away from metropolitan centers. Those who would follow him had better watch and pray that they enter not into temptation—whether they be in the city or in the country.

### ● *The New Testament—and the Cities*

As we consider New Testament Christianity, we find that we are much indebted to the cities. All of Paul's letters came into existence because of what had happened in cities. Had it not been for city folks, we would be deprived of much of our New Testament.

I do not mean to belittle the rural church or the rural minister. I am sure God can be found in the rural church. This article stresses the values of Christianity for city people, partly to remind members of rural congregations that no one group has a monopoly on God and religion. I write also to remind the city Christian that the consciousness of God's presence can be felt anywhere, if we take enough time to sense it.

## Prayer for the New Year

**By A. S. C. Clarke**

BLESS Thou this year, O Lord!
Make rich its days
With health, and work, and prayer, and praise,
And helpful ministry
To needy folk.
Speak Thy soft word
In cloudy days;
Nor let us think ourselves forgot
When common lot
Of sorrow hems us round.
Let generous impulse shame the niggard dole
That dwarfs the soul.
May no one fail his share of work
Through selfish thought;
Each day fulfill Thy holy will
In yielded lives,
And still the tumult
Of desires
Debased.
May faith, and hope, and love
Increase.
Bless Thou This year, O Lord!

# ☆ WHO'S WHO IN THIS ISSUE ☆

*Following pastorates in Boulder, Colo., Des* Moines, Iowa, and Los Angeles, Calif., Rev. NORMAN E. NYGAARD became minister of the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Steubenville, Ohio, three years ago. His book, *Strength for Service to God and Country,* was widely used during the recent war, and currently selling are his novel, *Deep Forest,* a book of dramatic sermons, *The Bible Comes Alive,* and a book of devotions, *America Prays.*

*Rev.* ROY A. BURKHART *has ministered at the First* Community Church, Columbus, Ohio, since 1935. He has always been interested in youth, having been one of the organizers and first secretary of the United Christian Youth Movement of North America and for many years a member of the board of trustees of the International Council of Religious Education; in his earlier years he was national director of youth work for the United Brethren Church. He has also been a member of the commission on home and marriage of the Federal Council.

*Dr.* MERVIN M. DEEMS *is professor of the History* of Early Christianity and Missions, Chicago Theological Seminary. In earlier years he taught at William Jewell College, Carleton College and Bangor Theological Seminary. In 1931-32, as American Fellow on the Albert Kahn foundation, he toured the world, spending most of the year in the Far East, especially India, Burma, the Philippines, China and Japan. He lectured in these countries on "Democracy," "Problems in American Life," "Internationalism" and other subjects.

*Rev.* HAROLD W. RUOPP *recently resigned his Cen*tral Church, Chicago, pastorate (after eight years there) to devote a period of time to lecturing and preaching throughout the country, with special emphasis upon student groups, ministers' conferences and interchurch gatherings. During his Chicago ministry Mr. Ruopp was active in numerous civic, educational and religious organizations. Throughout his pastorate he served as chaplain of the Illinois Institute of Technology and for a term as president of the Church Federation of Greater Chicago.

*Born in the Ukraine, Rabbi* ABRAHAM J. FELDMAN received his later education at the University of Cincinnati and the Hebrew Union College. Following brief periods of service as rabbi of synagogues in New York city and Athens, Ga., he went to Philadelphia, where he served for five years. Since 1925 he has been rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel, Hartford, Conn. He has been for years a leader in the fields of education, journalism, social and community betterment and religion. He has written many books, among which are: *The Faith of a Liberal Jew, The Adventure of Judaism,* and *The American Jew—a Study of Backgrounds.*

*Ordained in 1937, Rev.* W. HOWARD LEE *was for* several years pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Yellow Springs, Ohio, where he ministered to the students of Antioch College, and is now pastor of Memorial Presbyterian Church, St. Augustine, Fla.

*Rev.* ELDON A. RAMIGE *is minister of the Castle* Heights Methodist Church, White Plains, N. Y.

*Rev.* HERBERT W. HAHN *is minister of the Meth*odist Church, South Bethlehem, N. Y.

*Rev.* JULIUS FISCHBACH *is minister of the First* Baptist Church. Lansing, Mich.

# TITLES AND TEXTS ☆ WHAT PULPIT READERS ARE PREACHING ABOUT

DONALD A. OTTINGER, Clifton Methodist, Clifton Heights, Pa. "Friends of Jesus." John 15:15—"Henceforth, I call you not servants. . . . but I have called you friends."

TAYLOR G. BUNCH, Seventh-Day Adventist, South Lancaster, Mass. "Blessed Are the Covetous." I Cor. 12:31—"But covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet show I unto you a more excellent way."

JOHN E. PRICE, Methodist, West Davenport, N. Y. "America's Blessing, Responsibility and Opportunity." Luke 12:48—"He who has much given him will have much required from him, and he who has much entrusted to him will have all the more demanded of him."

JOSEPH W. REEVES, Trinitarian Congregational, Northfield, Mass. "On Being Glad to Go to Church." Ps. 122:1—"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

E. B. KEISLER, Fremont, Neb. "Life's Priorities." Phil. 1:10—". . . enabling you to have a sense of what is vital." (Moffatt)

FREDERICK H. OLERT, First Presbyterian, Detroit, Mich. "Toward the Conversion of America." Matt. 5:47—"What do ye more than others?"

HENRY H. SCHOOLEY, Church of the Mediator, Providence, R. I. "The Citadel of Liberty." II Cor. 3:17—"Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

J. H. HAMILTON, United, Maxville, Ont. "The High Cost of Building." Luke 14:28—"Which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost?"

ELMER Q. GLEIM, First Church of the Brethren, Philadelphia, Pa. "The Unity of Life." Col. 3:11—"Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all." (R. S. V.)

DONALD B. BLACKSTONE, First Presbyterian, Twin Falls, Ida. "The Sound of the Trumpet." Neh. 4:17—"The work is great and far extended . . . and we upon the wall are separated far from each other. Wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us." (American)

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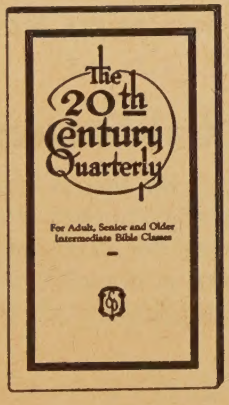


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*on the minister and his work*

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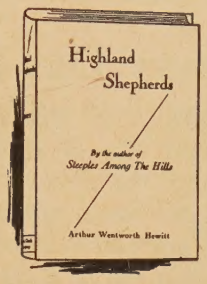


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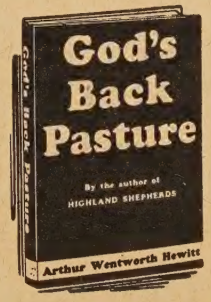


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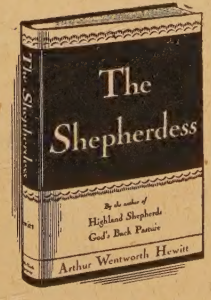


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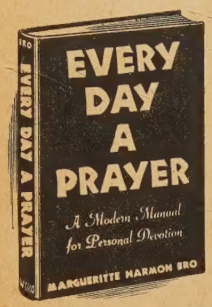


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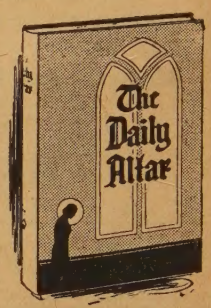


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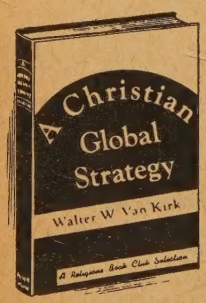


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